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ABSTRACT

These two transcripts from National Public Radio broadcasts discuss the development of religious schools and the relationship of religious education to modern American society. More than 20 religious educators contributed to the transcripts. Since it is estimated that one to two Christian schools open every single day, there is an assumption that public schools are no longer doing a good job. A parent suggests that children in private schools are better disciplined, taught more character, and get a better overall education. High expectations of these students result in responsible behavior. Dress codes and other regulations of parochial schools indicate lower expectations of their students. In Hebrew schools, the emphasis is on developing a person secure in his/her own heritage, better prepared to live in a multicultural, pluralistic society. The question of curriculum regulation of parochial schools by the state is one issue covered. North Carolina has definite curriculum laws for private schools and requires the administration of competency tests to all seniors. The publishing of pupils' names, parents' names, and places of residence is another state requirement with which Christian schools will not comply. A third area of disagreement is teacher certification and the states' rights to monitor private schools. (MR)

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OPTIONS IN EDUCATION

TRANSCRIPT:

Program No. 136: & 137: "Religious Schools"
Part I
and
Part II

A co-production of
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RELIGIOUS SCHOOLS"

PART I

WOMAN: I'm got a little girl. She's twelve years old. She's almost a young lady. And I want her to be a clean, very moral, innocent young lady. And by keeping her in a Christian school, I have a better chance in this than I do in putting her in a public school where she learns vulgarity; she learns filth; she is harassed by -- I just can't -- I just shutter to to think about it.

MERROW: Her daughter goes to the Harbor Christian School in Greenville, South Carolina.

REINHARDT: She's one of nearly five million kids who do not go to public school. That's about ten percent of all kids.

MERROW: Why don't they go to public school? Well, for most of them, or for their parents, the answer, in one word, is religion.

REINHARDT: There're lots of different kinds of religious schools. Catholic, of course. That accounts for seventy percent of the enrollment right there. But there are Jewish schools, Lutheran schools, Seventh Day Adventist, Baptist, Episcopal, fundamentalist Christian, and more.

MERROW: Enrollment in the non-Catholic schools is increasingly rapidly, but the Catholic schools are in trouble.

I'm John Merrow.

REINHARDT: I'm Barbara Reinhardt. And this week on OPTIONS IN EDUCATION, the religious options.

MERROW: First, let's go back to Greenville, South Carolina and reporter Bob Austin at the Harbor Christian School, a fundamental Christian academy.

GROWTH OF THE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL MOVEMENT

TEACHER: So if you can open your Bibles to Genesis, Chapter 3, please. Before we're going to do a little reviewing, though. We're going to find out how good you learned your verses. So I'm going to ask you some of your verses, okay? And you just raise your hand, and I hope that you know your verses for this morning. You're going to be graded on your verses now, as you stand up and as you deliver your verses, how you stand up and how you give this verse, whether you give it word for word or whether you miss a word or not.

AUSTIN: There's no doubt that fundamental Christian schools at the elementary and secondary level in America are on the increase. Dr. Walter Freemont, Dean of the School of Education at Bob Jones University in Greenville, South Carolina, has been following the growth of the Christian school movement.

FREEMONT: Well, it's estimated there's about one to two Christian schools starting every single day, on the average. So we have anywhere from three hundred to four hundred fifty, or so, schools starting out. It's very hard to get a finger on the exact number. But these are the figures that have been quoted, and I believe them as I see these Christian schools starting all over the country. And there is just a realization that the public schools are no longer doing the job.

AUSTIN: Fundamental Christians have many disagreements with today's public education. As Dr. Donald Wood of Harbor Christian School in West

Columbia, South Carolina explains, the major point of difference is one of philosophy.

WOOD: The public school basically deals in the area of humanism, where our school is a Christian school. Our philosophy of life is a a Christian philosophy of life. Humanism basically says that man is a product of his environment, that a man does what he does because his environment makes him that. It deals a lot with Freudian psychology, which tells us that man's subconscious or his background is what he can basically blame most of what he is. His mistakes come from that. Therefore, humanism says that the answer to all the ills of society that man's got is to change society.

Now, we believe the world needs to be changed too. But we believe the way to change the world is to change men, change a man's heart.

AUSTIN: But when a fundamentalist talks of heart, he doesn't mean turning himself over to his emotions. Quite the opposite. In that respect, fundamentalists stand opposite to much of the current popular religious revival. In their education, they pride themselves on their academic performance and their rigorous standards.

OFFICIAL: Anything that tends to stir up kids and get them feeling oriented, we don't allow. For example, rock music is a feeling oriented music. It's not a mind oriented music, and so we don't allow rock music. It turns on the gut feeling. We just say, "Look, the flesh has a tendency to go toward feeling anyhow, and we want to eliminate that gut feeling orientation. We want a mind orientation rather than a feeling orientation."

I think probably the number one advantage of a Christian school is a dedicated teacher. They have the same missionary vision that public school teachers used to have twenty, thirty, forty, fifty years ago. The average teacher salary, public school teacher salary, is about $14,000 a year; $14,220 a year I think is the national average. The average Christian school teacher's salary is about 6,000 a year. Now there's such a big difference here that you know the teachers are not in this because of money. They're in this because they're dedicated Christians and they have this missionary zeal to teach children basic moral and spirtual values and really teach children. I think this is probably the number one advantage.

TEACHER: The parents, for one reason or the other, are unhappy with their public schoo: education. And it's not because they're strictly Christians themselves. But some of them realize that the public education, I feel especially since they've taken prayer out of school. that the Lord's just not blessing Christian education -- I mean, pardon me, the public school, and that people see this. They're seeing the problems in the public school. They're seeing that so many of the teachers are not particularly interested that that child really gets the kind of education that that child ought to have. And any person that's got anything on the ball -- they're seeing this, and then they come to a Christian school, and they see that their born-again teachers are truly interested in their child. Because if I were in this for the money, well, I wouldn't have stayed in it for, you know, six months. As I say, for me perhaps it's a calling.

TEACHER: For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world, through Him, might be saved. Say it with me. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world, through Him, might be saved. He sent his son, Jesus, into the world to die for our sins so that we wouldn't have to die. Okay?

This week -- now, I want you to study this, not just here, but, for those of you who have your Bibles at home, to study at home too, John 3.17. Okay? Let's stand and sing our favorite song, "I'm No Kin to the Monkey." Stand up. Are you ready?

OFFICIAL: ...Education based upon the word of God is a better education than a secular education as far as God is concerned. If these fifth graders were three years behind the normal fifth graders in a public school and we were teaching about God and about salvation, that would make it worthwhile for God. But I think it's a known fact by this Stanford test that we give our kids every year, and we haven't given yet this year, that our students are ahead of the public school.

PARENT'S EVALUATION OF A CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

AUSTIN: Harbor is not unusual. Most fundamental schools show better test results than the public schools of the state. And that's a reason parents send their children to Christian schools.

Here's Carroll Howell of West Columbia.

HOWELL: Well, first of all, I think they give a better education in a Christian school. And I prefer a Christian private school to a regular private school in that I feel like they're better disciplined, they're taught more character and just generally get a better overall education.

AUSTIN: What about the religious education that they get, because obviously they have Bible every day, and they center their whole education around God? Do you have anything against that?

HOWELL: No, I prefer that, because, really, originally our country was founded on the Bible, on the principles of the Bible, and around God. And this is one thing I think is wrong with our country today: it's gotten away from God.

AUSTIN: Did your children ever go to public school?

HOWELL: No.

AUSTIN: Okay. They've always gone here.

HOWELL: Right.

AUSTIN: How old are they?

HOWELL: One's almost eight, next week any way. He'll be eight in about another week. And the other one is twelve. He'll be thirteen in November.

AUSTIN: How do they like it?

HOWELL: They love it. They love it. They don't want to go to school anywhere else. They have friends. Well, my son plays baseball with boys. And he doesn't even want to go to school with them. He likes to play ball with them, but, you know, that's as far as it goes.

AUSTIN: Do they mind the discipline? Do they mind the rules and regulations and standards?

HOWELL: No. And I think maybe one reason they don't is because we have basically the same standards at home.

AUSTIN: Can you consider any circumstance that you would send your kids back to public -- or to public school?

HOWELL: Only if I could in no way afford to send them to a Christian school. I think basically if I were going to send them to the average private school, I'd just as soon send them to public school.

REINHARDT: That report on the Harbor Christian School in Greenville, South

Carolina was prepared for OPTIONS IN EDUCATION by Bob Austin, Station WEPR, Clemson, South Carolina.

POSSIBLE LIMITATIONS OF A CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

MERROW: There are those who are skeptical, even critical of moral and religious zeal in the classroom. But underneath the skepticism is a serious question: is Christian education narrow, maybe even bigoted?

REINHARDT: George Williams, professor of Church History at Harvard.

WILLIAMS: Enough Christians in this country believe that education is so integral a part of their faith, their religion, their practice of religion that they must also have a separate system of education. And if they are paying for it, as they are, they are surely doing it out of conviction. And that, I think, gives motivation to the children. There remains this one point. In a world, in a society like American society, where the majority have accepted views about scripture and about the origin of human life that is common in universities and most religious circles too, these children, when they grow to maturity, may find that they are ill-prepared to defend their positions in conversation. They may keep their views to themselves. I would hope that in these Christian schools they would be adequately instructed in what is the common belief now about the origin of life and why the majority of the population is willing to accept the kinds of textbooks in physics and chemistry, geology, history that are used. It seems to me a Christian attitude would be benign and understanding towards the majority of the population and not aggressive with respect to the public schools; cooperative in all respects, without compromising their own Christian or Jewish, or whatever, religious convictions.

REINHARDT: George Williams, Hollis Professor of Church History at Harvard, speaking with Vivian Ducat of Station WGBH, Boston.

THE "REFORMED EVANGELICAL" SCHOOL AND ITS GOALS

MERROW: Maybe Professor Williams would be pleased by the approach to education taken at the Phil Mont Christian Academy in Dresher, Pennsylvania, near Philadelphia.

REINHARDT: That's a reformed evangelical school, not a fundamentalist school. Phil Mont says its emphasis is the development of intellectual and academic skills in a Christian context.

Ken Meyers prepared this report.

LAWRENCE: At Phil Mont we're basically attempting to provide our students, beginning with kindergarten and working on up to the 12th grade, with a basic academic education.

REINHARDT: George Lawrence, principal of Phil Mont Academy.

LAWRENCE: We're not only seeking for what might have been called a liberal arts education, but we're seeking, as well, to have the students understand their own culture and, as a consequence, be able to have two things when they graduate: one, an understanding of the needs of their culture, their fellow man, and, two, the desire and the ability to meet those needs.

The goals, of course, are originated in scripture. I believe it's the second chapter of Philippians, as a matter of fact, [which] tells us to have the mind of Christ. And he goes on to speak of being a servant. Now the most important calling a person can have is to be a servant. And as a consequence, we're training our students to serve, giving them a real capacity to serve as well. And hopefully, we can mirror the love and concern of Christ in our actions by dealing with culture and speak to culture on its

own terms, not by using some Sunday school jargon, but by being competent sociologists, competent politicians, competent artists, competent people speaking to a culture on its own terms.

LUGO: ...And remember we said that, or we divided those into four. And now we focus in on the second one which comes in historical order, but we're taking it first because it's a Christian idea of creation, fall and redemption.

REINHARDT: Social studies teacher at Phil Mont, Dr. Lewis Lugo.

LUGO: our next step will be, of course, to go back to the Greek idea of looking at the world. It has been common throughout United States history to view the Greek model of democracy as something to be imitated. And we're going to speak about that when we read part of Plato's Republic. But remember, we classified this Greek model as foreign matter.

The first thing I've attempted to do with the students is to indicate to them how the Christian alternative differs from other currents running through Western history. And we've isolated the Christian idea, and then how that is distinguished, for example, from the Greek model of reality, the Medieval model of reality, the modern model of reality. In order to do that, then, we have to develop our own Christian position while, at the same time, we're coming to terms with classical literature that is not from a Christian orientation. We're reading some of the reformers, such as Calvin and Luther, reading Saint Augustine and also some of the more contemporary Christian reflections on these issues.

From the non-Christian, we'll be reading Aristotle. We'll be reading Plato, as far as the Greek idea is concerned. We're going to be concentrating most of all on Saint Thomas Aquinas as far as the Medieval model. And as far as the modern thinking, we'll have quite a few. The first reading that they'll have is from Sigmund Freud. Civilization's Discontents will be the first reading that we'll be having there.

MEYERS: What about the more abstract, less social disciplines of, say, mathematics or physics or other areas of study that are represented? Are they taught any differently here?

LAWRENCE: Yes, I believe they are. Obviously in mathetmatics, 2 plus 2 is going to equal 4. And if you're training your telescope on the moon and you look at a particular crater, the name of that crater remains unchanged. By the same token, our teacher, when training the telescope, stands in wonder and awe of the creation God has made. And he doesn't look at it as a random happening or a chance occurrence, but he looks at it as a reflection of the personality that God has, the Creator has. And by the same sort of thinking, when our math teachers approach teaching mathematics, mathematics is a way of describing reality. And that reality reflects the God who created it. Certainly there's no difference in teaching a mathematical fact. But the way we approach the mathematical fact is different.

DeHeer: Well, usually we don't really need to be disciplined that much. Really, it's just like if we're rowdy or anything. We don't do anything too bad. But, you know, they're not strict, not bad at all.

REINHARDT: Lucy DeHeer, a tenth grader at Phil Mont.

MEYERS: Now why is it that you don't do anything bad? Not you personally, of course, but most high schools and junior high schools -- it's pretty violent sometimes even. Why is it that everyone's so well behaved?

DeHeer: Well, not everyone's well behaved. But it's just that people know that they've got to act different. And if you're in a Christian school, sometimes you just tend to be that way because you know that people are Chris-

tians and you want to reflect that. It's not always real easy, though, because if everyone's a Christian, you think you don't have to act real good. But I do think it's better than public schools.

LAWRENCE: One of the things that kind of makes me chuckle is for all the many important questions parents could ask, frequently the question I hear first is "Is there a dress code?" And the answer I give them is no, unless you consider this a dress code. We expect our students to be clean, to be neat and to be modest. My basic feeling is that a teenager who can't dress himself is beyond hope anyhow. So we're looking for responsible young adults. We're not looking for rigid behavior patterns. You don't make people responsible by placing them in a situation where they can do nothing but what you consider to be best. You help them be responsible by giving them real choices. A real choice means sometimes, however, they're going to choose to fall flat on their face. And that's something we give them the opportunity to do. As much as we can, we'll support them. We'll lovingly bring them back off of their face. But the opportunity has to be there for real growth to take place.

MEYERS: Does it work?

LAWRENCE: I believe it does. As case in point, our assembly this morning had 7th grade through 12th grade. The woman was singing opera. You could hear a pin drop. Now that's not because all the 7th graders love opera. It's because they've learned that respect for the efforts of others is proper. And they can deal with that responsibly.

You can go into our bathrooms in this building, which is now going into its 9th year, and you'll find nothing written on the walls. Just nothing. And that's not because we go down there and paint over the walls once or twice a week. It's just the students have realized that it's best to be responsible with the property here. That's not to say we have no problems. Unfortunatley, Christian schools don't enroll all angels. But we can deal with the problems we do have, because we expect people to be responsible, and people do live up to expectations quite frequently.

REINHARDT: That report on the Phil Mont Christian Academy was prepared for OPTIONS IN EDUCATION by Ken Meyers.

MERROW: Ironically, the term "Christian school" has come to mean schools run by two closely related branches of Christianity, the fundamentalists and evangelical sects. Catholics, Episcopalians, Lutherans and Quakers are Christians as well, but their schools are identified by name -- Catholic school, Quaker School, and so forth.

QUAKER SCHOOLS

REINHARDT: As you might expect, religion is more prominent in the curriculum at Christian schools, where the creed may be "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," than it is at, say, a Quaker school.

MERROW: Quakers worship in silence at what is called a meeting. Mark Fromuth talked to students at the George School, a Quaker boarding school in Newtown, Pennsylvania.

STUDENT: There're people who hang out together, but it was a lot worse where I used to go to school. A lot worse. Because at least here, there's not a lot of "Gee, we're a lot better than you are."

STUDENT: No, there's not as much as in public school.

STUDENT: If you allow it to get to you, then it will. But if you ignore it completely, it doesn't affect you at all.

STUDENT: You know what I think, that people -- they try to be tactful, but they're not as accepting as most places here, you know.

FROMUTH: They're not as accepting?

STUDENT: All right. Well, it's sort of 50/50.

STUDENT: This is the most accepting. Like, I've been in public schools and I've been in private schools, and private schools, as a whole, are much more accepting, and this school, I think, is very accepting of things. Because, you know, no, I haven't been put down for a lot of things I've done. The only way that they're not accepting is that if you don't behave like a human being, they'll get on your case. If you really chase down other people and really give other people a hard time, people will give you a hard time here. At least that's what I've found.

STUDENT: I think you're given a chance. But once your chance is taken up, then it starts. I mean, come on, there're certain people who are really cracked down on.

STUDENT: Well, I've been here a while. Seriously, you begin to be established, and you can do pretty much what you want after a while.

STUDENT: Yes, that is true. That is true.

FROMUTH: Are you aware of it being Quaker at all?

STUDENTS: Yes. Yes.

STUDENT: It's really interesting. It really is. I've been at other schools. And it was like another boarding school. And they're not Quaker, and I could sense the difference in the whole atmosphere. Things here are pretty well together. So that has a lot to do with it. Even though some of the things may not be good, they're together.

FROMUTH: So that overall, you know, even though there are cliques and there are pressures, you know, you'll give it a plus, though. I mean as far as schools go, you like it here.

STUDENTS: Oh, yes. Absolutely.

HEADMASTER ANALYZES OBJECTIVES OF A QUAKER SCHOOL

CURTIS: We are a Quaker school. And that is a school that means to be Quakerly rather than a school that is just for Quakers. And we don't emphasize being a religious school. But nevertheless, we do take it for granted, because we are concerned that education has to be more than book learning. It shouldn't just be a notional thing. And as you learn, or, that is, as you deal with information, it's the ideas that rest behind the information and some sense of purpose and stewardship that you get in relation to that information that makes the difference. If it's just head, then that's not good enough. A man has to think with his heart as well as with his head.

FROMUTH: Let's take the public school student who comes to George School for the first time. He's introduced to meeting for worship, which is the Quaker Church service. He goes into the meeting house. He sits down in a group of other students, and there's silence. Silence prevails. There's no person who stands up and gives a sermon, and it seems to be a relatively unstructured atmosphere. What's his reaction to that?

CURTIS: I can't say for sure that he's not confused, or at least that he doesn't take to get used to meeting for worship. Of course, he does, if he's totally without experience. I think the first thing is that at our school, at any rate, the student quickly knows that meeting for worship,

partly because of the way I feel about it, is, I would almost say, not only at the center of how well the school functions in terms of what we're talking about, but is the very -- it's the price that has to be paid: caring about a good meeting for worship.

Of course, in one sense, it's not terribly difficult. One sits in silence. There isn't some form or program to follow. On the other hand, that means not to be totally lost. Wondering when things are going to begin, or feeling it's boring, or feeling very, sort of restless is a problem. It is our definite experience that this is not a problem that remains with students. The students after they've been at George School one to two years do come to value this time in almost every case. They do value it as a time when they can be still for themselves and when they are still in a sense of centering down with their neighbors. And it's a very precious thing. And it is a real thing.

REINHARDT: Eric CURTIS, headmaster of the George School, a Quaker boarding school in Newtown, Pennsylvania.

* * *

JEWISH RELIGIOUS SCHOOLING

MERROW: Students at the Jewish Day School in Rockville, Maryland. The singing is for fun, but it's also part of the curriculum, because this school, like most religious schools, is striving to help kids establish their religious identity.

REINHARDT: Alice Youngerman visited the Jewish Day School.

* * *

YOUNGERMAN: Entering the two year-old school is like stepping into another culture. Signs everywhere are in Hebrew and English. In the elementary classrooms, Hebrew letters are posted on one wall, English ones on the other. And the halls echo with the voices of small children singing Hebrew songs and older students discussing passages from the five books of Moses. Instruction in the Hebrew language begins in kindergarten. In the upper grades, students learn Judaic history, philosophy and law. For every three classes conducted in English, two are held in Hebrew. The school is divided into an upper and lower division -- kindergarten through 6 and the junior and senior highschool. At both levels, the English curriculum, or general studies program, as it's called, follows that of Montgomery County, Maryland, where the school is located. The school is so new that it won't graduate its first class of high school seniors until 1980. The Jewish Day School tries to correlate general and Judaic studies wherever possible. In a 6th grade history class, for example, the children study Jewish as well as Greek history. And teachers are free to use religious examples in the classroom.

Marion Wolfe explains what this means in her math class.

WOLFE: We can try to relate some of our materials to, let's say, holidays which are coming up, or to certain ethical and moral values, which you could not mention in the public schools. For instance, if we talk about conservation, we might mention that the earth was not created by human beings; therefore, we have no right to destroy it. This might be one approach.

In my subject, which is mathematics, I even relate it to mention of numbers in the Bible. And yesterday I talked about the introduction of the zero by the Arabs, and we talked about Arabic culture versus Jewish culture. And I tried to relate it to the values, as I see them.

* * *

YOUNGERMAN: Jewish Day School sessions begin at 8:15 in the morning and

run until at least 3:00 in the afternoon every day. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, the upper school students are in class until 4:35. Since the day is so packed with academics, the students often complain about not having time for sports, music or art, even though those classes are available.

STUDENT: We wanted more electives than we have now. For electives, we just have French, Spanish and typing. And other schools, like, you know, public schools have acting and, you know, like dancing. And it's, you know, more fun. And you can also get, you know, experience from other things besides just, you know, intellectual.

WOLFE: Well, I think the school day is too long, and at times you have children in your class who are extremely tired, because many of them get up at 6:00 and don't get home until about 6:00 in the evening. They take about eleven different subjects per day. And when you get mathematics from 2:30 to 3:00, you can't expect a twelve year old to be at the peak of his energy.

YOUNGERMAN: Despite the rigorous academic schedule, most students say they're happy at the school and don't feel isolated or separated from other kids their own age because they go to a parochial school. And several of them echo the feeling of headmaster Sol Burak.

BURAK: By providing this type of education, by having internal resources that one can develop in an institution of this type, one is better prepared to live in a multicultural, pluralistic society. A secured person, a person secured in his own resources, his own heritage, his own contribution, the contribution of his people as a sub-group within the total society, if he has that security to fall back on, he then can become an active contributing part to a multicultural grouping. He doesn't have to be defensive. He doesn't have to worry about what someone else thinks about him. He knows himself. He knows what he's bringing as his contribution. He knows, and with a great deal of pride in many instances, of what he is capable of doing, based upon his identification as a Jew within the United States, within the multiculture that we exist.

YOUNGERMAN: Dr. Sol Burak, headmaster of the Jewish Day School in Rockville, Maryland.

* * *

MERROW: Kids at the Jewish Day School, Rockville, Maryland. That report was prepared for OPTIONS IN EDUCATION by Alice Youngerman, WAMU, Washington, D. C.

THE DECLINING ENROLLMENT IN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

REINHARDT: Catholic schools today enroll seventy percent of the students who go to private school.

MERROW: That's a lot, but a little more than ten years ago, the figure was 87%. At that time, nearly nine out of every ten non-public school kids went to Catholic school.

REINHARDT: Now, while other religious schools are growing, the Catholic schools are losing students.

MERROW: Why? Well, money's a factor. Costs are going up. Also, the Catholic schools no longer hire only nuns and priests as teachers, and the new lay teachers are unionizing.

REINHARDT: But there's a third reason for the decline in enrollment, as Father Patrick Farrell of the U. S. Catholic Conference explains.

FARRELL: The Catholic community in America had been a community that

was a separate kind of community. You always had a kind of feeling that the Catholic community was concerned about its special identity, and often separate and seeing the American system as a bit threatening to that tradition. In the early '60s, I think we began to see, with a Catholic President, that, well, Catholics were entering the mainstream. And the Catholic community looked at its institutions and was trying to evaluate what was the need for those institutions. The prior position was every Catholic in a Catholic school. And that was based upon a very old struggle that went back to the 1800s, in which the Catholic community felt that the public school system was really a Protestant school system and that it was some kind of a threat to their ethical values, and that sort of thing.

REINHARDT: And there really was prejudice, wasn't there?

FARRELL: Oh, sure. I think that it's historical. The Know-Nothing Party, or groups like that, that no Catholic need apply, and the feeling that there was something foreign about the Catholic, and couldn't be a good American citizen and, at the same time, be a good Catholic. I think that was all disabling, and the realization that, well, maybe we ought to look at what being Catholic did see if those things that we needed under those former circumstances were as important today.

So when we got into the 1960s, people said it really knew whether I need this particular approach to things." The Church was also saying "Your conscience is extremely important; you make the decision about your life. It's not the kind of situation in which someone decides for you what's the best thing." And so the sacraments went down that way. Combined with that, Catholic families, which had been very large prior to the Second Vatican Council and the changes in the notion of what was the size of family that people ought to have, Catholic families became smaller, and are now almost typically the same as any other average middle income kind of family, because Catholics have become middle income people.

REINHARDT: Father Patrick Farrell of the U. S. Catholic Conference in Washington, D. C.

NARRATOR: There are almost ten thousand Catholic schools in the United States, with more than three million students.

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS IN TRANSITION

REINHARDT: Jay Baltazore reports on one Catholic school, Immaculate Conception in San Francisco.

BALTAZORE: As Catholic schools go, Immaculate Conception in Sacramento, California could be viewed as typical. It's in a state of transition. Forty-eight years ago when the school opened, the area surrounding it, known as Oak Park, was largely white. Today it's comprised mostly of poor and middle class black families. And of the school's 210 students, nearly 75% are either black or Mexican-Americans.

Immaculate Conception was also once a parish school, but that's true no longer. The students now come from as far away as ten miles. One teacher has a daily sixty mile commute. The students here wear the traditional Catholic School uniforms, the boys in blue pants and the girls in pleated check skirts. Comments on parent: "It's easier on the clothes budget that way and tends to make the students equal, despite their diverse economic backgrounds."

First grade instructor Barbara Moreno has the longest tenure of any teacher here, seven years.

MORENO: The thing that probably impressed me the most is that they all get along so well. A new student can come in, and the very first day he's

here, it's as if he's been here all along, and everyone welcomes everyone and gets along really well that I don't notice that much difference. I don't look to see what area my children come from. I don't know the ones that come from out of the area and which ones come from in the area, because it doesn't make any difference to me. And the way they all melt together: it doesn't show up to me.

* * *

BALTEZORE: In Sister Veronica's second grade class, the children are beginning the day with a song. Upstairs, Dana Ford attacks his students a little diversion.

FORD: Now, listen, if you're smart, you can go to college and study about plumbing in the Pearson's home.

STUDENT: Wait!

FORD: They found out that Pearson had running water in his faucets inside his home. And if you want to study that in college, you can become a Pearson faucet major." (Laughter.)

BALTEZORE: Of course, religion is part of the curriculum, even for the students who aren't Catholic, and they comprise fifty percent of the student body. Rita Gilleaudeau, the school's grade inspector, says it's not so much the new course of religion that's stressed as much as the quality of teaching.

GILLEAUDEAU: It's not a forty-five minute-a-day type thing, you know. You're a Catholic for twenty-four hours a day. So whether you're in a class-room or at home with your brother and sister or your parents, or whatever, you know, I don't want the kids, you know, to be hypocrites. I want them to be responsible and to be accountable for what they do for twenty-four hours a day.

I think -- I think that I have four or five students in the class who are non-Catholic. But I can honestly tell you, I do not know who those four or five are. I don't treat them any differently than I do the rest of them. I don't ask them any more questions. I don't expect any more or any less in any subject.

BALTEZORE: How do you like Immaculate Conception?

STUDENT: It's okay. You don't get to do everything you want. If you go to a public school, they have a lot. You know, they don't learn as much as here. So I'm going to learn a lot.

STUDENT: Well, it's all right sometimes. Like if you don't understand the work, or I don't do it, I don't like to come to school. I always get nervous. That's why you see me with these slips in my hand.

CIVIC ROLE OF CATHOLIC PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS

BALTEZORE: Like many other Catholic schools, Immaculate Conception is far from financial security. In fact, five years ago the declining enrollment and increasing costs nearly forced the Diocese of Sacramento to abandon the school. They've since resolved some of those problems, at least for the time being. In addition to the three or four hundred dollar tuition fee paid for each student, parents must agree to volunteer at least eight hours of their time each month for cafeteria or classroom work, or for various projects which help raise funds for the school. Father Dan Madigan, Immaculate Conception's pastor, says the school's community role is also being expanded.

MADIGAN: We serve the neighborhood in whatever way we can. Like presently, we have a food locker, and last year we gave a one to three days'

supply of food to ten thousand people. We're opening up a senior citizens home here. So we're watching the trends. And whatever way the Church can best serve the community, we'll try and be there with it. But I do think, I can see, in my opinion, the neighborhood is coming back to be a family neighborhood again. People are moving in and renovating a lot of the homes. Family people are moving in. I can see that happening more and more.

BALTEZORE: As for the parents, they seem unanimous in their support for the school.

What do you find in this school that's different from any others?

PARENT: Much better education, much more structure and interest in the children, smaller classrooms. My youngest son was kicked out of the public school when he got here from Kansas City. He wasn't allowed to come back. He'd gotten in fights every day. And since he's been in Immaculate Conception, he's not had one problem at all.

PARENT: We figure that the teachers more, and they have more patience with kids.

PARENT: I feel that they take more time with them, you know, in teaching them, because they don't rush from us. You know, they don't put too many in a class.

PARENT: Well, I brought my child here because the public school -- the public school system is just not what it used to be.

BALTEZORE: What's the problem with it?

PARENT: So far as I'm concerned, they just don't care.

PARENT: Better education, and there's less violence here.

BALTEZORE: The school recently began a petition drive to urge Congress to pass the Tuition Tax Credit Bill. That type of legislation may play a vital role in the future of this school.

At Immaculate Conception School in Sacramento, California, I'm Jay Baltezore for OPTIONS IN EDUCATION.

TUITION TAX CREDITS AND THE CHURCH-STATE ISSUE

REINHARDT: Reporter Baltezore mentioned tuition tax credits, the most recent effort to direct public funds into non-public schools.

HERROW: A tuition tax credit would be just that: an amount you could deduct from your taxes if you were paying tuition to a private school.

REINHARDT: There won't be tuition tax credits this year, not for elementary and secondary schools, any way. But there's already a lot of public money flowing to non-public schools in the form of textbooks, transportation and classroom space. According to HEW, it adds up to an estimated seventy-five dollars, per year, per student from the federal government.

HERROW: There's a nice irony here. Catholic schools are working hard to increase the amount of federal aid while many of the fundamentalist Christian schools are now in court trying to keep government completely away from their operation.

REINHARDT: The tensions between church and state: they've always been with us. Reporter Vivian Ducat asked Harvard's George Williams to trace those tensions.

WILLIAMS: New Engl... central organization of s... a minister, or called a ... early days, had the resp... But this separation of c... not completed, you know... state of Massachusetts, ... till 1833. So that on th... state, to a certain exte...

Now other ... planning, had a similar ... of Virginia, for example ... fought to certainly for ... constitutions to be put ... been very prominent in t... land, where Roger Willi... and there was a good deal ... schools. And it took a ... in terms of the American ... plan based upon the parish ... to be having increasing ... to an administration of the ... state aids, but simply ... a parochial school, but ... parish preschool, the par...

And at t... not taxed, of course; ... church property or are ... charitable intentions; ... a good deal of harassment ... separate system. And so ... over this. And then ... having established its pr... for an increasing amount ... also our federal government ... to say, well, textbooks ... given to parochial schools ... accrue to parochial schools ... I think they would not have ... to preserve their independence.

and took education very seriously and in their founda... society, on the basis of the town government, elected ... minister, who was also called a teacher and, in the ... onsibility for teaching the children of the town. ... church and state, including church and education, was ... In some states of the federal Republic, in this ... for example, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, un... e state level, we've had a tie-up between chuch and ... nt, including also education.

r parts of the union, as it was formed at the be... ie-up between the Episcopal Church and the state ... But it was precisely in Virginia that Jefferson ... the separation. He regarded that as one of his major ... on his tombstone. And that concept, of course, has ... he tradition of another New England, namely Rhode Is... ms also felt that church and state should be separated ... l of resistance to the establishment of parochial ... great deal of courage on the part of bishops to argue ... Constitution for the right to have independent educa... sh. And that's why it's called parochial education. ... ly under the diocese, or the archdiocese, and there'd ... he archdiocese or diocese for the education of that ... n the basis of the parish. It would still be called ... really it was a diocesan system of education in the ... ish school.

First they were not given any support, except they were ... t would be part of the American arrangement not to tax ... ther property that has eleemosynary or philanthropic, ... But apart from that, they got no relief, and they got ... t, too, from some people who did not want to have a ... we went through a period of considerable conflict ... reasingly, I would say, the Roman Catholic Church, ... rivate schools, its parochial schools, began to ask ... ent, through HEW, or its predecessor, has been willing ... that are the same as in the public school could be ... ls. And little by little, a great many benefits now ... ols, or the Catholic parochial school system, which ... have accepted at the beginning, because they wanted ... ndence.

Now they are financially hard pressed, and I think that they probably will, and I hope they will, think through the implications of any further concessions. Because I believe myself a pluralistic educational program in America is to the good of the American people, both collectively and to the individuals who are being educated.

REINHARDT: George Williams of Harvard, talking with Vivian Ducat, Station WGBH, Boston.

THE ISSUE OF CONSTITUTIONALITY

MERROW: Edd Doerr works for Americans United For Separation of Church and State. He believes that it's unconstitutional to link church and state in any way.

DOERR: We, the people, are obligated to provide the highest level of good, quality education to every child in America. And the best way to do this is the way we have been doing it for a hundred and fifty or more years, through a nonsectarian, non-political public school system open to all kids without discrimination. Now if some parents for private or religious reasons prefer to separate or segregate their own children away from the rest of the

comunity in private schools, which exist primarily for religious purposes, this is a decision that they have made, and the public is under no obligation to underwrite the costs of that choice. If, indeed, we changed our policy in this country and began subsidizing parochial and private schools, the whole process of education would become fragmented or Balkanized. We would lose economies of scale, and we would emulate such countries as Northern Ireland and Great Britain in segregating our children by religion, and very probably also by social class and by ethnicity and by academic potential.

The question is, should the public be forced, through taxation, to support schools which provide religious training which is forbidden in public schools and which select children and faculty along religious and possibly other lines?

REINHARDT: Isn't what you really fear, though, just that if more parents would be able to send their kids to private schools because there was state aid and they could afford it, that it would really be an attack on the public school system and that that kind of attack the public school system couldn't live up under?

DOERR: If public funding were available to make the choice of a non-public school fairly cheap and easy, there would be an understandable tendency on the part of many parents to think this. "Gee, I've got a chance to get my kid into an elite school where there won't be any mess-ups around; there won't be any problem kids around, and he'll really coast along. So if the state will subsidize this choice, then I'll take it." This tendency would be very strong. In other words, if government came along and said "We will subsidize your choice in automobiles," there would be a tendency for people to give up Volkswagens and Hondas and move to Cadillacs, if the government would help pay for this.

REINHARDT: Well, wouldn't that kind of competition help the public schools?

DOERR: The parochial schools do not compete with the public schools under the same rules. They are selective. They do not have to accept any child. They usually do not provide programs for the handicapped. If their program is oriented toward a college prep curriculum, as most secondary private schools are, this would lead to a class stratification in education, a two tier education, an education, private education subsidized by government for the affluent and the more well educated families, and a public system where all the rest of the kids are dumped, as in a wastebasket or in a public hospital as compared to a nice private hospital.

MERROW: Edd Doerr of Americans United for Separation of Church and State in Washington, D. C.

RELIGIOUS SCHOOLS AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO INTEGRATION

REINHARDT: One persistent criticism of non-public religious schools has been that they're being used by whites to avoid integrated public schools.

MERROW: And there's no question but that a lot of instant academies did appear almost overnight when busing for desegregation was ordered by courts.

REINHARDT: Catholic schools have also been accused of being escape hatches for whites facing integration. But the Church denies that.

MERROW: In Minneapolis and other cities, the Archdiocese publicly stated that it would not enroll white students who wanted to attend Catholic schools solely to avoid integration.

REINHARDT: Maury Bernstein talked with two priests from Minneapolis.

Father Francis Schultz and Father Bernard Casserly.

CASSERLY: The statement that Mr. Schultz talked about in reaction to the policies regarding the acceptance of students seeking to flee integration is nothing new in the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis. When I served on the Archdiocesan Board of Education when it was first formed, one of our first decisions was to adopt that requirement. It has been reaffirmed, restated by boards of education of the Archdiocese almost yearly since.

But you've, of course, asked a very basic question: how can a school, how can a principal, how can a teacher determine that a kid who wants to get in or the parents who come and see him, see the school -- what is his motive? What is her motive in choosing the Catholic school? Now how does a principal go to a parent who says "I want my kid to go to this school" and say "Are you fleeing integration?" Maybe they'd deny it. How could we prove it? It would be extremely difficult to nail this down. And motives are always hard to ascertain.

SCHULTZ: I'd like to say that that's perhaps one of the greatest myths about Catholic education in the United States is this whole business about the schools being a kind of haven for white students who want to flee the whole business of desegregated public schools. I have a survey that was conducted recently that of Catholic schools in ten metro areas -- and this was in 1975-'76, and since that time I think the numbers have increased, at any rate -- that showed that nearly a quarter million students, twenty-six percent, were black, 17 1/2% were Spanish surnamed, and 2 1/2% were other minorities. These are all the kinds of people in Catholic schools.

BERNSTEIN: What happens to religious education in a school, Roman Catholic day school, when the majority of the kids are not Roman Catholic? It must change a little, at least.

SCHULTZ: When you have a high percentage of non-Catholic students, for example, in the urban Catholic school, which is, I guess, as we mentioned, sixty-six percent minority, the program is not changed in the area of teaching religion. It's taught to everybody. The parents -- strangely enough, the parents want their children to have religion. And so they're very happy to have that. The only difference is that there is an option in terms of receiving sacraments, which would have to be like initiation into the Catholic faith. They have that choice, and that's usually not during school hours when that kind of preparation is done, because it's done with parents. But many of them do choose to do that after they've been in the system, obviously, because they seem to think that that's a good idea.

But then I know of other systems around the country where they do have a high proportion of non-Catholics where they have taken an entirely different tack, and that is inviting persons like ministers or rabbis to come in at different times right during the school program and teach religion during the school day and in that way take care of those children that have a different persuasion and still have a fine educational system.

MERROW: Two Catholic priests, Francis Schultz and Bernard Casserly, talking with reporter Maury Bernstein in Minneapolis.

THE MISSION OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

REINHARDT: It's true that minority populations in Catholic schools are growing. Seven years ago, blacks comprised only five percent of the total Catholic school enrollment. Last year they were just over seven percent. Still, that hardly compares with the sixteen percent in public schools. And as we mentioned earlier, overall Catholic school enrollment is dwindling, faster than the public school enrollment. At the same time, other religious schools are growing, some very rapidly. I asked Father Patrick Farrell of the U. S. Catholic Conference why Lutherans, Baptists, Jews, Presbyterians, fundamentalists and others are establishing more religious schools while

Catholics are abandoning theirs.

FARRELL: Well, I disagree. There are five million students in non-public schools, and four million of them are in Catholic schools. To say that four million students do not represent the fact that those parents want Catholic schools I think is, you know, just not looking at those facts. We should recognize the fact that millions of parents this September opened their front door, paid a great deal of money and sent their children out to those schools. That is a choice they make every time the school year begins. And that should be recognized as the fact that they are choosing, and at great sacrifice, as we've just already said.

REINHARDT: Well it's easier, of course, to talk about those who are still there. But even while forty-eight schools opened this year, forty-eight new Catholic schools, eighty-two closed. So, yes, maybe there are lots and lots of Catholics this year who are sending their students, and maybe there'll be lots next year, but if it keeps declining, eventually there won't be any.

FARRELL: Sure. I think that if you -- a system that has just decline is heading in that kind of direction toward annihilation. My reading of the statistics is that it's coming down slower and slower. And I think most people are predicting that in about three years that it will level off, so that we will be a smaller system.

REINHARDT: Father Patrick Farrell of the U. S. Catholic Conference in Washington, D. C.

* * *

MERROW: Catholics, fundamentalist Christians, Jews, Quakers: It seems as if every religion has its own schooling.

REINHARDT: That's probably true, particularly the elementary grades, the impressionable years.

MERROW: By now a couple of questions may have occurred to you. Who regulates these schools? I mean, who decides if the school is up to standard, and who sets the standards?

REINHARDT: Does the government have a compelling interest in how citizens are educated? And is that interest more important than keeping church and state separate?

MERROW: If the state cannot come in and pass judgment on church schools, then what's to stop me from creating my own religion and starting up a school? I'll call it the Church of Merrow. Enroll your kids now. Call me at 202-785....

REINHARDT: There are ways to stop you. But, in fact, most of the states do not have laws about the educational content of private schools. But they'll find a way.

MERROW: And in fact, that's what next week's OPTIONS IN EDUCATION is about, the struggle between some church schools and the state over who decides what goes on inside the classroom.

REINHARDT: If you can't be with us or if you want to read all about it, the transcript of this two-part series costs one dollar. The two cassettes cost ten dollars, total.

MERROW: Here's our address: National Public Radio -- Education, Washington, D. C., 20036.

REINHARDT: Let me give you that information again. The transcript, one dollar. The two cassettes, ten dollars, total. Ask for the two-part

series, "Religious Schools."

MERROW: And ask for our free program guide with our schedule. That's free.

REINHARDT: Our address again: National Public Radio -- Education, Washington, D. C., 20036.

MERROW: And please, tell us the call letters of your NPR station.

REINHARDT: Material for this program came from Bob Austin, WEPR, Clemson, South Carolina; Vivian Ducat, WBGH, Boston; Alice Youngerman, WAMU, Washington, D. C.; Maury Bernstein in Minneapolis, Jay Baltezore in San Francisco, and Ken Meyers in Philadelphia.

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I'm Barbara Reinhardt.

MERROW: I'm John Merrow, and this is NPR, National Public Radio.

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RELIGIOUS SCHOOLS"

PART II

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REINHARDT: It was more than religion that brought those people together in Philadelphia recently. They all have the same job. They're school teachers in fundamentalist Christian schools. They believe that the Bible is literally true, and, for them, the Bible is the basis of their lives in and out of school.

TEACHER: Everything we teach, everything we learn has to have a biblical basis, or else it's no use, because the only true thing that's worth living for is for the Lord. And if little children cannot understand that God is important to them, they need to learn from when they're in kindergarten, even before, that God is the most important thing to them. And if they learn that from kindergarten or from when they're born on up, they'll live lives that'll please the Lord, and that's the most important thing. They'll be saved and learn to know the Lord Jesus Christ as a personal savior. And that's -- that's one of our main goals, that each child in our classroom knows the Lord as a savior. They can depend upon that Lord then to get them through the rest of their lives.

TEACHER: The public schools are lacking in the basics, I feel -- reading, writing and arithmetic, the three R's that are always talked about. And it can't be denied that the public school is just not turning out a good product. I feel that they have the facilities to turn out an excellent product. They have facilities much better than the Christian schools have. But I feel that the public school is not making an effort to always meet the needs of the student.

REINHARDT: Two of the teachers from fundamentalist Christian schools. They went to Philadelphia to plan strategy for fighting off state attempts to regulate their schools. There're over five thousand Christian schools in the country, with over a half million students.

THE BATTLE OVER STATE REGULATION OF RELIGIOUS SCHOOLS

I'm Barbara Reinhardt, and this week on OPTIONS IN EDUCATION, the second part of our look at "Religious Schools." We probably should call it the fundamentalist option in education. My co-host, John Herrow, went to North Carolina, the scene of the most heated confrontation between Christian schools and the government. There, one percent of the school-aged kids go to Christian schools. That's about twelve thousand kids in all. North Carolina closely regulates its private schools. It's one of the few states that does. Most states have minor and inobtrusive regulations, such as fire and safety rules, and a minimum number of days the school must be open. But North Carolina laws and regulations require all private schools to list names, addresses and parents of all students, and names and educational background of all teachers. The state also has a curriculum plan, and each private school must teach certain basic courses. In November, the state will require all schools, public and private, to give competency tests to all seniors.

The Christian schools used to obey the law. But now they're saying that the state is asking too much. Their schools, they say, are part of the church, and therefore the state has no business regulating them. Not so, says the state. Here's Craig Phillips, North Carolina Superintendent of Public Instruction.

PHILLIPS: That's the clear issue. And it's just like any other law that exists that says "Thou shalt." In order to conform to licensing for some other kind of institution, you do certain things. So it is still clearly an issue of what does the law say and who obeys the law. And it's my hope,

I've said a number of times, that the leadership of the Christian academies will obey the law. And that's all we're asking them to do.

REINHARDT: The state has won the first round. A local judge ruled that schools in North Carolina must file the required information. Before the ruling, sixty-two schools refused to file. But that number has now grown to eighty-three.

John spent a couple of days at one of those schools in North Carolina.

* * *

MERROW: Right now I'm in the chapel of the Calvary Christian Church in Southern Pines, North Carolina. The church pastor, Kent Kelly, is one of the leaders of the Christian school protest here. Pastor Kelly also serves as chief administrator of the Calvary Christian School, a day care through grade 12 school with 126 students this year and twelve teachers. About seventy-five percent of these students are singing hymns right now. That's how they start their school day. The hymns will be followed by three pledges of allegiance, first to the Bible, then to the Christian flag, and then to the American flag. After that school principal Dwight Creech will deliver a thirty to thirty-five minute sermon. That's the way every school day starts.

MAN: Let's pledge allegiance to the flag.

STUDENTS: I pledge allegiance to the Christian flag....

CREECH: We have three pledges. We pledge allegiance to the Bible. We pledge allegiance to the Christian flag. And we pledge allegiance to the United States flag. And we do this every Monday morning.

MERROW: In that order? It's Bible, Christian flag, United States.

CREECH: That's right, in that order.

MERROW: So there is a real difference between this school and the public schools.

CREECH: That's right. In that respect, there would be.

MERROW: You must have some reading of how kids feel about this chapel, about coming in every day and going to your sermon.

CREECH: Well, yes, I do. I make no personal appeal in the chapel program for children to come forward. I resist the influence of emotion in matters of religion. Our faith is based on knowledge. I'm not being noble. And when these children learn enough of the truth, they come to me on their own and talk to me further about their concerns. I do not make an appeal for children to come forward after a meeting. I sit in my office, and sometimes they come to me, somewhat sporadically. They'll speak with their teachers privately, sometimes timidly. And many children get saved.

We believe in the fundamentals of the faith. And the Bible teaches very specifically, very definitely the things that are imperative in matters of salvation and obedience toward God, and that the Bible must be interpreted literally; otherwise, you're not a fundamentalist.

[Sermon]

Yesterday, we made reference to the fact that the 9th and the 10th chapters are connected. The Lord Jesus says in this first verse "Verily, verily I say unto you." Who is he speaking to? He's speaking to those same

Pharisees we read about in the 9th Chapter. Let's go back to the 9th Chapter and read at Verse 40, and we'll see. "And some of the Pharisees which were with Him heard these words and said unto Him 'Are we blind also?' Jesus said unto them 'If you were blind, you should have....'"

STUDENT RECALLS EVOLUTION OF CALVARY CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

MERROW: That's Dwight Creech. He's the principal of the Calvary Christian School.

A word about the school itself. This is the sixth year. Today there're 126 students. About half are church members, about half from the town. Six years ago there were only forty students. One of them was Allen Kelly, the pastor's son.

KELLY: Well, I like it better than public school. When the school first started, they were seeing the problems in the public schools, and so they looked around. We didn't have any private or Christian schools in Moore County, so they decided, well, why not start a Christian school? And so one summer some people came along and donated about $75,000 for a Christian school, and then we got this place. And two weeks before school was to start, people came down to enroll their kids, and there wouldn't be any place for kids to go to school at. And they'd say "Where was it?"

Well, this middle building over here was built between the two weeks between school and the day school started. All of this was all flooded. Over here where the ball field is has got railroad ties under it to keep the water under the railroad ties, and then there's dirt over it with grass.

MERROW: And did you help do it?

KELLY: Well, some when I didn't have to work down where I work now.

MERROW: Let's talk about the state and what it's trying to say to you folks, what it's trying to say to this school about that reporting.

KELLY: Well, they're trying to tell us that we're going to use the stuff they want us to use. And if we were to use their textbooks, why not just go to public schools? It'd be the same thing. And if we do what they want us to do, well, they can tell us whether we can discipline or not and what textbooks to use, and all that stuff.

MERROW: So as far as you see, if you start giving in now, they'll just be kind of taking over.

KELLY: Right. If they come in and take over, why not just go to a public school? Why waste our money and come here?

MERROW: Well, let me ask you that question. Why not go to public school?

KELLY: Well, this is better than public school. We can learn here, learn what we need to to get us a job when we get older.

MERROW: Speaking of jobs, what kind of job would you like?

KELLY: I work right now at Sullivan's Footgear, the biggest shoe store in the southeastern United States. And I don't know yet what I would like to do. Just when I get older and the Lord shows me what he wants me to do, I'll do it.

MERROW: That's Allen Kelly, the pastor's son, a 9th grader here at Calvary Christian School in Southern Pines, North Carolina.

The school itself consists of five buildings, all more or less connected. There's also an athletic field, a couple of administrative offices. A kitchen and a library are attached to the church building, which is about twenty-five feet away. The library supposedly has three thousand volumes. But a lot of them are old Reader's Digests and Hardy Boys' books and very old National Geographics; books that probably would be rejected by a modern library. The church people themselves tell me that they put that library together back in the days when they were complying with the state's regulations and that the books the kids use are found in the classrooms. It costs $48.00 a month to go to school here, but the rates are scaled. The more kids you send, the less, per child, you pay. It comes to about five hundred dollars a year per child, but the school says it does not turn away children just because they can't pay.

NATURE OF INSTRUCTION AT CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

TEACHER: The second part of this says use commas to separate items written in a series in these sentences. The first sentence: "Evil temper degrades society as much as worldliness, greed and drunkenness." Where would you put your commas in this sentence?

MERROW: That's the 5th and 6th grade, sixteen kids, one teacher, working on punctuation rules. A couple of things jump out at me. I'm sure they do to you as well. One is the nature of the sentences that the kids are working with. There's obviously a message beyond the placement of the commas. Another is the well-meaning teacher who inadvertently gives away the answers when she reads the sentences, because, of course, she pauses where there're supposed to be commas. Maybe the kids know the rules, and maybe they don't, but you sure can't tell listening to her.

TEACHER: Where would you place the comma? Laura? After correctly and before your conjunction "or." All right, second sentence. "A wise son maketh a glad father, but a foolish son is a heaviness of his mother." Where would you place a comma? Crystal? After father. What is your conjunction in this sentence? But. That's right. Three....

MERROW: Much of the controversy here in North Carolina is over teachers: are they qualified, and does the state have a right to decide whether teachers in Christian schools are qualified? I'm with Peter King, who teaches science, math and art at Calvary Christian School. He has a bachelor's degree in science and a masters degree in art. But his principal concern in the classroom is Jesus Christ.

KING: The most blessed young person in the world would be one that learns something about the Lord. You're saved if a young person has the fear of the Lord, has a little bit of wisdom and goes out in the world and can learn academic things and have them organized by the word of God.

MERROW: Peter, how is what goes on at this school any different from indoctrination? I mean the kids are hit with Bible information, Bible stuff all day long? Now let me put forth an hypothesis. I could teach. I could set up a school and then teach little kids that this chair right here was God. If I taught for six hours a day and for years and years, they'd grow up believing that. How is this different?

KING: Well, the Bible gives parents the responsibility and the commandment, really, to train up their children in the way they should go. And that's what we're doing. It doesn't say let your children do anything they want to do, and when their old they'll be able to make a decision for themselves. It says in Timothy -- the Apostle Paul was writing Timothy and said that "From a child, Thou has known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make Thee wise in the salvation." So we're just parents that believe the Bible. And we can look to the Bible for guidance in educating our children in school or at home, or for several other things.

* * *

CONFLICT BETWEEN THE STATE AND CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

MERROW: I'm in the office now of the Reverend Kent Kelly. He's the Pastor here at Calvary Memorial Church and head administrator of the Calvary Christian School, which is part of the church, or is not part of the church, depending on how you interpret things. I have in front of me two different forms, and maybe this will help make the case a little bit clearer. One is the North Carolina State Department of Public Instruction's form that they require non-public schools to fill out. They ask the usual stuff, the school name, the mailing address, and they ask a series of questions: how long is this school -- how many days is the school open? How many hours a day? What grades? How many kids go? Are the kids immunized? Then there are three crucial areas of questions, and these are the three areas that the Christian schools are not willing to provide information. School enrollment. They want every non-public school to file a report with the local administrative unit, the country superintendent, giving the names of all the pupils attending, their ages, their parents or guardians' names, and the places of residence. Christian schools will not give that information.

Point number two, the curriculum. The state wants the non-public schools, Christian schools and others, to indicate what subjects are taught, in which grades, and how many units in each discipline for elementary and secondary.

The third sticking point, teacher certification. "List full-time and parttime teachers, full legal name, grade or subject taught, and Social Security number." That, of course, would enable the state to check up on the qualifications of the teachers. That report's the basis for approval. Here's what the Calvary Christian School is willing to provide. How many days the school's open, how many hours a day, the number of kids and the fact that the kids are immunized. None of the others; no information; no kids' names; no parents' names; no curriculum data, and no teachers' names. How come?

KELLY: Well, in the first place, we refuse to file the names of parents and give their residences, and so forth, because we don't want the state using that information to go after parents in the middle of this fight. Now the only real teeth that exist in the law right now is the prosecution of parents for contributing to the delinquency of a minor for not having their children in an approved school.

MERROW: So you won't give them the parents' names. Now why won't you give them the curriculum data?

KELLY: Well, all right, the curriculum data and the teacher certification are the two major things that we have under appeal at the present time. And we reject the state's claim to license our teachers, which is what it amounts to -- certification. And we reject their claim to unlimited curriculum power, which is the what the recent court judgment has given them.

MERROW: One thing that troubles me on this is that you're standing up now, and you stood up last year, but for the first four years of this school's life you didn't object; you gave the state the information it asked for and got the state's approval. Why? Why the change?

KELLY: I'd say basically the change came about because we realized after a number of months dealing with the state on other issues that we had been wrong in allowing the state to claim the kind of power it did over a church ministry. I'm sure that there've been times in your life when you came to a realization of something that you'd never realized before. And this really is what happened to us. I mean what we're talking about here, see, is a principle. We're not talking about specifics. And we can can get down to specifics to try to help people understand what's involved, because people today have a hard time seeing principles.

MERROW: Is it your principle that the bottom line of curriculum is, in fact, the Bible and that theirs is certain courses, and for them the Bible is over and above, and for you it's under and the foundation?

KELLY: Well, we see the Bible as absolutely necessary to the understanding of all truth. We believe that there are no non-interpreted facts, that everybody lives by faith. The person who believes in evolution is living by faith. A person who is an agnostic, someone who believes in the ultimacy of his own mind, he's living by faith. And objectivity is a myth. There's no such thing as that. Everybody operates from the basis of certain presuppositions that to them is their basic philosophy of life. And ours is the Bible.

MERROW: Let's roleplay a sec here. Let's put ourselves in the position of the state board. And they get this note from you which says "Well, we have 126 kids." I mean if you're the state and you're responsible for a compulsory attendance law, what do you do?

KELLY: The very simple thing, you see, way back in the beginning would have been for the state to recognize that we're not just a typical private school; we're a religious entity. We wouldn't exist apart from the existence of this church. And it would have been very simple for them to say, now here's one percent of the school age population of North Carolina. We're going to say these people have First Amendment protection; we're not going to get entangled in a fight with them, and we're just going to write here into the regulations "As long as they meet the fire, health and safety information and as long as they make a matter of public record standardized test scores, we're going to leave them alone."

MERROW: But the state board couldn't do that. There's a state law which says these things have to be -- these questions have to be answered.

KELLY: Well, there's a state law that says that the State Board of Education shall supervise and regulate to the end that children receive a basic education. And the law says that we must provide to them such reports as are required by the state superintendent. Well, the superintendent doesn't have to require any reports.

MERROW: The law says, the state law of North Carolina says you've got to file the names of your teachers, and so on and so forth. That's very detailed. This is one state where they have spelled all that stuff out.

KELLY: Well, it says that we must have teachers and curriculum that are approved by the State Board. It doesn't say that we have to do that in any specific fashion.

MERROW: But aren't you in the curious position of arguing that the State Board should have kind of looked sidewise and not looked at the law very carefully and not stood up for that law and enforced it, while you yourself are saying, well, you're a man of principle. You're saying they -- you're faulting the State Board for looking at the law and saying, well, that's what it says; therefore that's what we'll do. In effect, the State Board is holding to a principle that, as board, it's got to uphold the state law.

KELLY: Well, they don't have to do that until the next session of the legislature.

MERROW: Well, the State Board could come to you and say "Hey, Kelly, look, you don't really have to be so principled about this. You just give this information." It's the same kind of argument.

KELLY: No, they don't have any convictions for their position. You see, the way you understand that is this. If you went to David Bruton right now, Chairman of the State Board of Education, and you held a gun to his head and you said 'I'm going to kill you if you require these schools to file reports,'" and that man would back off. But if you held a gun to my head and

said "I'm going to kill you if you don't file," you'd have to kill me.

THE CASE FOR STATE CERTIFICATION OF RELIGIOUS SCHOOLS

MERROW: Ironically, just around the corner and up the hill from the Calvary Christian School is the office of Dr. David Bruton. He's a pediatrician. He's also Chairman of the North Carolina State Board of Education.

Dr. Bruton, do you have a choice in this? Could you overlook these, what are apparently violations of the state law?

BRUTON: I don't think so at all, John. As a matter of fact, they came to us asking for -- they called it benevolent or benign interpretation of the laws. I believe it's central that a group that is charged with administering the laws must obey the laws. And the law was quite clear. As the first court step proves or reiterates the clearness, that the State Board is charged with administering this law. And we don't have a choice, as, of which parts of the law to obey.

MERROW: Do you think there are some of the leaders in this movement who want to be martyrs, who would like to have a confrontation?

BRUTON: I don't believe I ought to tell National Public Radio what I think about that.

MERROW: The look on your face tells me that you think some people are, in fact, in this for more than the principle perhaps.

BRUTON: I didn't say that, John; you said that.

MERROW: I know, but that's my question.

BRUTON: You know, I believe it'd be the better part of valor not to answer that question, because I've been sort of straightforward before, and I believe I'd have to compromise what I think, you know, if I answer that question.

MERROW: Are the people you're dealing with, that is the people in the Christian schools, all dealing from principle? Are they all honorable and above board?

BRUTON: Yes, I think so. Yes, I think so. And people of good, solid, firm religious conviction.

MERROW: Even though you're on the other side and even though you disagree, do you admire these people?

BRUTON: Basically, I do admire people who stand up for what they believe in.

MERROW: I think you just waffled on that.

BRUTON: I tried not to waffle, John. Yes, I admire people who act upon their convictions.

MERROW: Let's continue the conversation, and let me just say what happened. We turned the tape recorder off, and we started talking informally. And you said there's more to your own views of what's going on here. You said that you think there're several other issues, that enrollment's down in Christian schools, that the quality of their educational product has gone down, that they're scared about the tests, and that they want to increase their collections. Now you said you didn't think that they thought this through, but you think they kind of realized that as they stood up to the state, their collections increased, their group came together, and, as you said, there's

nothing like a common enemy, and so they have picked on the state, the Big Brother or the state as the common enemy to kind of pull themselves out of a bad situation.

BRUTON: Well, what do you want?

MERROW: Well, I want you to affirm that these are the things you just told me.

BRUTON: Well, I think that maybe I'll learn to keep my mouth shut. No. You know, again, what we said to start with I think is what I'd want to say on the radio about it, that I believe that these are men of conviction who are convinced that the state is intruding into their religious freedom and that....

MERROW: But you're also saying that there's more to it than that. You're saying that there's a very real situation of church attendance falling, of collections falling, of the school attendance falling, and therefore they need something to bring them together.

BRUTON: No, I wouldn't say that. I wouldn't say that.

MERROW: You did say that when I turned this machine off.

BRUTON: Well, what I was saying was this would be a way to look at it. And I think that would be a way to look at it. But I am not going to look at that way.

MERROW: That's the Chairman of the North Carolina Board of Education, David Bruton, a pediatrician in Southern Pines. He says it's up to the judge, not the board, and the judge might just be in the mood to send the pastors to jail. Some of the pastors, on the other hand, Bruton said, are burning to be martyrs.

CHRISTIAN SCHOOL OFFICIAL REBUTS STATE CHARGES

It's impossible to prove or disprove what Bruton suggested might be motives of some of the Christian school people; that is, dwindling revenues and dwindling church attendance and falling enrollment at the Christian schools. But Calvary Christian School enrolls 1265 students. That's 24 more than it did two years ago. I did raise these issues with Kent Kelly, Pastor at Calvary Christian Church, beginning with a question of whether he wants to go to jail.

KELLY: No, I've been there. I've visited people there and seen the size of the roaches and the kind of people that are in there. And I just as soon stay on the outside. But I'm ready to do whatever I have to do to defend the principle that's involved in this case.

MERROW: There are people who say that you want to go to jail, that you want to be a martyr.

KELLY: Well, there're people that'll say most anything.

MERROW: What are you getting out of this personally?

KELLY: I'd say that the main thing that I'm getting out of it is an unbelievable number of hours on the road away from my family, an unbelievable amount of money taken away from this church and out of my pocket. And I've averaged well over 3,000 miles a month for the last eight months on this thing. Our church has spent in excess of $14,000 that we could have spent on other things. And the one thing that I'm getting out of this is being able to sleep at night knowing that I'm doing what the Lord wants me to do for the cause of Christian freedom.

MERROW: Let's take it the other way. School attendance is up. I'll wager your church attendance is up and that collections are up. Perhaps they could say, well, there; there's what Kent Kelly is getting out of this, more attention and a more prosperous church.

KELLY: Well, it's not up that much. Last year we started with 118 students, I think it was. And this year we have 125. We can't get any more people in the services now than we did six months ago before this thing really got hot, because we don't have any more room, no place to put them. And I feel like that any time you get into a situation like this, there're going to be people who question your motives. And again I say it's because they don't have any standards in their own life. They don't believe that a person could really be that convicted before the Lord about anything. But I'm not really that concerned about what people think about it, because I know what the Lord's given me to do, and I just have to do it.

MERROW: The Kentucky case, on which the judge ruled that the state had no case, the state has no right to certify the teachers in non-public religious schools: does that give you hope that ultimately the United States Supreme Court would rule for you?

KELLY: We're hoping very definitely that they will. If they don't, we're in serious trouble. In that decision, the judge, who was very liberal, did not say one word in his opinion in favor of the state's position, and he did not say one word in his opinion against the Christian school's position.

MERROW: Now let me present a situation, and tell me how we'd solve the problem. A sham school, you know, sets itself up. I set one up. I call myself the Church of Merrow, and I start a school, and I persuade a few people to send their kids there. And I'm not giving them much education at all. What protection is there? Shouldn't government come in and close that school down?

KELLY: Very definitely. And this is one thing that people don't seem to understand about our case. We're not objecting at all to the fact that there is a legitimate police power in the state. They have concern with public health and public safety and public morals. And they can come into any given situation and prosecute for fraud. All right. But I'll tell you what the state's saying. They're saying "If you're going to have a school that operates outside state jurisdiction, you're going to be guilty until you prove yourself innocent. We're going to assume that you're a fraud until you prove to us that you're not." And that's not Americanism; that's totalitarianism.

MERROW: That's Kent Kelly. He's the Pastor at Calvary Memorial Church. He's the chief administrator of the Calvary Christian School, and he's also one of the leaders, statewide, of the protest. He says the state won't close the schools directly. Instead, he thinks the state may go after the administrators, send them, including Kelly himself, to jail and perhaps fining them heavily as well.

LEGAL PRECEDENT IN FAVOR OF CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

Christian school people in North Carolina have taken hope from a decision in Kentucky recently. There a state judge ruled in favor of the Christian schools and said that the state had no business trying to regulate Christian schools, that it was an entanglement of church and state expressly forbidden by the Constitution. Christian school people here, of course, hope that the same kind of decision will be forthcoming in North Carolina. The same attorney, the attorney who represented the Christian schools in Kentucky, William Ball, is also representing the Christian schools here in North Carolina. And that means something. The attorney's William B. Ball. He's won a number of significant cases, the most important being Wisconsin v. Yoeder, a Supreme Court case in 1972 that established the right of Amish parents to exempt their kids, keep their kids out of public schools at a certain age.

Meanwhile, however, this particular school, Calvary Christian School in Southern Pines, North Carolina, and about one hundred other Christian schools in the state, continue with Christian education. Here's a sample.

A SAMPLE OF CHRISTIAN INSTRUCTION

TEACHER: Okay. This is economics, and these are 11th and 12th grade students in this class combined. The first thing I want you all to do is the three people that were absent, or I guess it was three, take out a half-sheet of paper, and I want you to tell me how man is limited, in what two areas, and tell me why he is limited. In the production of goods and services, and so forth, why is man limited and how is he limited?

Okay, Dora, how is man limited, in what two areas, and why?

STUDENT: He's limited in his resources because God cursed the earth, and it doesn't produce like it used to. And he's limited in his ability to satisfy his wants and needs because he's a human being, and you can't work twenty-four hours a day and live and have what you want.

TEACHER: That's very good. Man is limited because he doesn't have the resources at his fingertips. Gold is scarce. Iron is scarce. Everything we have is scarce. And so he's limited in that way. He's also limited in his ability. You can't work twenty-four hours; you can't pick certain things up. You have to use machinery. So he's limited in those two areas.

Okay, take out your notes. And yesterday we were talking about inelastic....

MacNEIL: My name is Michael Anthony MacNeil, and I go to Christian Calvary School in Southern Pines, North Carolina.

MERROW: Now you're in 9th grade now, so you may be able to skip along, but you've got a couple of more years here.

MacNEIL: Yes, sir.

MERROW: What do you think you'll do when you finished here, Michael?

MacNEIL: Well, I want to go to Oral Roberts Christian College. And I want to go up there and see if I can't make the world a little better.

MERROW: See if you can do what?

MacNEIL: Well, I just want to go up there and learn about Christ more to build my education.

MERROW: How about work? What kind of work do you think you might do?

MacNEIL: Well, I want to be a preacher, but not at the present, right at the moment. I believe when God calls me, I'll go. But not now.

MERROW: Do you hope someday to have a church and maybe even a school?

MacNEIL: Yes, sir. I want a big church, a nice sized school. And the way it's going right now, I don't know if it's going to be possible. But I believe it will.

MERROW: Why do you say that? You sound pessimistic.

MacNEIL: Well, I believe we're going to win it any way, but they're trying to put us down right at the present.

MERROW: Would you go to jail for this school?

MacNEIL: I surely would.

SLAYTON: Hello. How are you?

MERROW: Hi. Is this your class?

SLAYTON: Yes, this is kindergarten.

MERROW: Ah, that's the best time. They get to play a lot.

SLAYTON: I know it. Well, we just go out for recess in the morning.

MERROW: Uh-huh. What do kids in kindergarten work on?

SLAYTON: They learn to read.

MERROW: Will they be reading by the end of kindergarten?

SLAYTON: Uh-huh.

MERROW: That's terrific. That's not true in an awful lot of public schools.

SLAYTON: I teach them phonics, and they learn. We're working on the alphabet sounds now. And then we gradually put words together. And by Christmas, they're reading simple words.

MERROW: Here come some curious kids. So that some kids in the first grade who haven't picked it up actually come back to kindergarten for a little while to work on phonics.

SLAYTON: Yes. Right now I have two that did not -- are not picking it up very fast. We thought it would help them to come back, because I go into it more thoroughly.

MERROW: Now how does Christianity enter into the teaching of phonics, if it does?

SLAYTON: You've asked me a good one. I really don't know.

MERROW: When you teach them letters, those are letters. It's not a Bible lesson, or anything like that,

SLAYTON: No. It's just really the letters.

MERROW: Many of the teachers I have talked to in Christian schools in different places around the country say that, in fact, Christianity goes through the whole curriculum. And they tell me about math and that sort of thing.

SLAYTON: Yes. Well, it does. Now we -- I always stress Christian values and to do their best and to say the things clearly, you know. And I teach them right in the beginning that the reason that they're learning to read is so they can read the Bible. That's the chief aim in life is so they can read the Bible, because that's the most important thing to them. They don't know it, but I try to them that all year long.

MERROW: How long have you been teaching?

SLAYTON: This is my fifth year here.

MERROW: And before?

SLAYTON: And then I taught in Greenville, South Carolina.

MERROW: In the public schools or in another Christian....?

SLAYTON: I substituted in public schools. I taught in a Christian school there.

MERROW: Since you've taught in both types, how about comparing them.

SLAYTON: I wouldn't go back to the public school for anything. I just substituted in a public school. I never did teach. But I didn't stay there long, because I couldn't discipline the children. It was just -- you just couldn't teach them. Unless they'll sit and listen, you know, you can't teach in a confused situation. And there's very little discipline. And I didn't like the atmosphere at all. I felt like that wasn't, just wasn't where the Lord would have me. So I started to work in a Christian school.

MERROW: Do the kids at this school watch things like "Sesame Street" and the "Electric Company?"

SLAYTON: Well, I don't encourage "Sesame Street" because of the music and the general teaching on it, which is secular humanism.

MERROW: Now let's talk about the music first. I mean the songs I know are, you know, sort of Kermit the Frog type songs.

SLAYTON: Well, there's a lot of rock type music on it. You know, the beat is there. And I think that's very bad for a child to hear.

MERROW: Why?

SLAYTON: It disturbs their equilibrium or their thinking, or something. It's just -- it's very disturbing to a child to hear that.

MERROW: You said also they're teaching secular humanism. How?

SLAYTON: Their whole -- the whole structure is man is the center of all things. That's the religion in the public school. It's also the religion on the TV.

MERROW: Of course they'd get in trouble if they started bringing in one God or another, or one religion or another.

SLAYTON: Oh, yes. Yes, but they don't -- see, it's very subtle. A lot of people don't see and think that "Sesame Street" is an excellent thing for children. But they see the subtlety behind it.

MERROW: And the subtlety is a kind of self-centeredness.

SLAYTON: Yes. And, oh, there're all different things, like "do your own thing" and, you know, everybody doing what they want to and not what they're supposed to.

MERROW: I remember segments in "Sesame Street" talking about cooperation and working together, and all kinds of lessons like that.

SLAYTON: Yes, and it's all got a slant. It's all got the wrong slant to it. You'll never find that God is the center of it. Never.

MERROW: So if you know kids are watching it, do you call the parents, or do you....?

SLAYTON: No, I wouldn't do that. I'd just -- if they mention it, I try to -- we just don't talk about it that much. I feel like if the parents want them to watch it at home, that's none of my business. The parents -- they are in charge of the children. And I can't tell the parents what to do.

HERROW: Tell me your name.

SLAYTON: Pam Slayton.

HERROW: That's Miss Slayton. She's the kindergarten teacher here at Calvary Christian School.

A FIRST GRADE CLASS AT CALVARY CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

SLAYTON: Go ahead.

HERROW: What's going on?

SLAYTON: We have two that go into kindergarten to get extra help in phonics and writing. So they leave in the morning. They'll be back before lunchtime.

HERROW: And this is first grade.

SLAYTON: This is first grade. Right.

Now here's what your work is this morning. David, sit down. All right. Everybody is going to do this. Now we're going to practice writing. Now we just went over the D-sound. What sound does "D" make?

[Class mimicks sound.]

Okay. Now, right here on number one, on the first line, I want everybody to write the capital "D" and the little "d" and do it all the way and fill out the line. And what's going to go on line number 2. The same thing.

Okay. Now I put out blends here on number 3. Let's say them.

[Class exercise in phonics.]

Okay, write the blends. Now, David, Sonja, Richard, Hannah, Brit, David, Christy, I want you to do this. Now this is something new, so listen. I started a word, but I left something out. Now if you add either "g" or "n," it's going to make a word. So what you're going to have to do, you're going to have to sound it out. You think you can do that?

All right. Now it's going to make sense with one of these letters, and the other one is not a word. And you sound it out, write it and put in either "g" or "n," and it'll make a word. Okay? All right now.

HERROW: What about W-A? They could put an "N" or a "G" there, and it would make a word.

SLAYTON: With some of them, it will be either one. Right.

HERROW: Same with B-A.

SLAYTON: Right here. So either one. So they're going -- well, they're going to get one or two of them right.

HERROW: And we've got a lot of work to do, a lot of copying. There are five, six different exercises on the board. Everybody does the first two. Then some kids do number 3, and some kids do number 4, and everybody does number 5, which is a math exercise, writing numbers. And then the last verse is the Bible verse, which the kids will copy. The one that I asked the question about: there are a series of three letter words missing a letter. The two missing letters are "g" and "n." And the teacher said put

in the missing letter, either a "g" or an "n." Well, in fact, a couple of these words, you could put either a "g" or an "n" and have a right answer. That is W-A. You could put the "G" there or an "N." B-A. Put a "G" or an "N." R-U. You could put a "G" or an "N." The teacher didn't tell them, though. So we may have come slightly confused children at one point.

THE NEXT CHURCH-STATE CONFRONTATION

I'm with Dwight Creech, the principal of the Calvary Christian School now. We're in the office of the pastor, Kent Kelly. The next major event in this drama that's being played out here in North Carolina has to do with the filing of data that the state has requested and requires and that the court has told the church it's to provide. The churches, 83 of them now, say they will not fill out the form that the state has sent them. Most of them are going to send in a letter with some of the information, but not all of it. There's another day, another confrontation coming, and that has to do with the minimum competency testing that the State Legislature has ordered in all schools, public and non-public. The Christian schools, most of them, nearly all of them, say they're not going to give these tests in their schools. They do say, however, that they already given standardized tests and that they're more than happy to provide the scores, in fact publish them in the newspapers. The tests have already arrived at Calvary Christian School, and we've got the box right here. And I think Dwight Creech, the principal, is about to open the box, as soon as we get a knife. There's the knife.

Well, nothing jumped out at us. And there's the package of tests. Let's use a sample question so we don't give the test away here. You want to read down?

CREECH: Below is a sample exercise. Please read it silently as the material is read aloud.

"Beverly Clinton agreed to rent an apartment from Ellen Bartone. The apartment rents for $235.00 per month. Beverly paid one month's rent in advance. She will move into apartment #16 on March 1st. The blank receipt for the first month's rent is shown below. Look at the rent receipt. Use the information to help your answer, sample item S-1."

MERROW: So here's the question. And then there's a rent receipt, and then there's the question, "What should be written on the line 'Received From?'" Do you want to risk an answer?

CREECH: "What should be written on the line 'Received From?'"

MERROW: In here, I guess.

CREECH: S-1.

MERROW: Let's see. Where do you write? You must write the name of the -- oh, I see, one of these answers.

CREECH: Right. Beverly Clinton. That's what you would write. She's the one who's doing the renting.

MERROW: That's right. Okay. That's her receipt. I'm glad you answered that. I was going to say Ellen Bartone. It's hard to know whether you'd find anything objectionable. But of course, it's not the test that you find objectionable. It's the idea of a state mandated test in your school.

CREECH: That's right. The exercise of a mandate is what we believe to be unconstitutional. To exercise such a mandate against an establishment of religion is a serious entanglement of our liberties.

MERROW: The point is that the state is entangling itself in the practice of religion when it comes in to have a statewide test given in church schools.

CREECH: That's exactly right. The state is posing as sovereign and sovereign above God.

MERROW: Of course the state is not going to come in and give these tests. They're saying you should do it.

CREECH: That's right. But they're compelling us. They're mandating by authority of law and threat of prosecution if we do not. So this is the problem.

MERROW: And you're not going to do it.

CREECH: Definitely not.

* * *

THE CONSTITUTIONAL CHALLENGE FROM THE STATE'S PERSPECTIVE

MERROW: I'm in the office now of Andry Vanore, Andrew Vanore, actually. He's the Deputy Attorney General for the State of North Carolina, and, as such, he's responsible for the state's side of this particular case. Why, in your judgment, is it important that the state of North Carolina regulate what goes on in Christian schools?

VANORE: I think it's important that the State of North Carolina be allowed to set minimum educational, secular educational requirements for all schools. We have a compulsory attendance law in North Carolina. The courts, that is the federal courts, have consistently upheld the right of the state to require children of certain ages to attend a school, whether it be public or non-public. There's no question but that parents who choose to send their children to non-public schools have that right. However, at the same time, we believe that the state has the obligation and the right to assure that children going to non-public schools are taught certain courses, such as reading, writing and arithmetic, and that those courses are taught by minimally qualified teachers. That's all the state is trying to do here.

MERROW: Let's look down the road a bit. You won the first round in a local court, a state court. Now the State Board will meet early in November to decide what to do when the schools fail to file their reports, as they say they will fail. Now the number has grown to eighty, over eighty Christian schools saying they will not file the report required by the state. The State Board meets in November. What's likely to happen at that time?

VANORE: Well of course what will happen at that time is that we, that is members of the Attorney General's staff that have been involved in the case, in the lawsuit, will advise the State Board of Education as to which schools have failed to file reports or have failed to file complete reports as required by the court's order. The State Board will then, at that time, have to make a decision as to whether or not its lawyers, that is the Attorney General's Office....

MERROW: That is you?

VANORE: Okay, that's me. We'll go back to the Superior Court and ask the Superior Court for further relief. Now that further relief could involve a number of things. We could ask the court to impose civil fines. We could ask the court to jail certain administrators who have willfully and -- who have willfully failed to follow the court's order. What would likely happen, as far as I'm concerned, is that we would simply, if authorized to go back to Superior Court -- we would simply call to the Superior Court's

attention those schools that have willfully failed to file reports, who have willfully failed to follow the court's order.

MERROW: You say you'll just leave it up to the judge?

VANORE: Yes, I would say that the judge can certainly make a decision as to what he thinks appropriate.

MERROW: You make yourself sound, and your office sound, really like messengers. And everyone else says that is not the case. They say that you're really very eager to prosecute this case.

VANORE: That's not so. We're not eager to prosecute the case. We have to recognize this, Mr. Merrow. Right now, today, the law of North Carolina is that which the Superior Court has determined to be the law. Unless and until that's overturned, that is the law of North Carolina and should be complied with.

I have some real problems in my own mind in dealing with a group of people whom in every respect I have a great deal of respect for. I believe that they are sincere in their belief. I simply believe that they're wrong.

MERROW: That's Andrew Vanore. He's the Deputy Attorney General of the State of North Carolina.

* * *

AN OVERVIEW OF THE LEGAL ISSUES AT STAKE

REINHARDT: Let's quickly restate, or try to any way, the positions. One side, the state, is saying, in effect, that in order to protect against shysters and charlatans setting up fly-by-night rip-off schools, it's necessary for the state to set up minimum standards for every school and enforce them. The other side says, again paraphrasing, it's better to risk a few charlatans than have the state heavily involved in religious schools. In a way, it's a question of which is the greater danger, charlatans or the state.

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